

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7312

INFO AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

CINCPAC HONOLULU

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 1701

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, PGOV, TH

SUBJ: PATTANI SETTLEMENT AND THE FUTURE

FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION BANGKOK JAN 26 FM SONGKHLA RPTD
FOR YOUR ACTION/INFO:

SONGKHLA 021

E.O. 116524 GDS

TAGS: PINS PGOV THAI

SUBJ: PATTANI SETTLEMENT AND THE FUTURE

REF: SONGKHLA 019 AND PREVIOUS

1. AGREEMENT TT END PATTANI PROTESTS JANUARY 23 ENDED
OVER ONE MONTH-LONG DEMONSTRATION AND GAVE MUSLIMS NEARLY
ALL THEIR DEMANDS. UNIVERSITY STUDENTS AND TEACHERS NOW
BACK IN SCHOOL. RTG COULD HAVE SAVEE A LTT OF TROUBLE--
AND PERHAPS FUTURE CONFRONTATIONS, SINCE FORCES NOW HAVE
A BETTER IDEA OF THEIR TWN STRENGTH--BY SETTLING ON SAME
TERMS SOON AFTER NOVEMBER 29 MURDERS.

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2. RTG AGREED TO: A. ARREST MARINES WHO KILLED MUSLIMS
(ARREST WARRANTS ISSUED JANUARY 23 AFTER SETTLEMENT).

B. COMPENSATE VICTIMS' FAMILIES

C. TRANSFER MARINE UNITS FROM SOUTH THAILAND

D. TAKE NO RETALIATORY ACTION AGAINST

DEMONSTRATORS

E. INVESTIGATE DECEMBER 13 BOMBING

F. IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS AND CALIBER OF

OFFICIALS IN MUSLIM PROVINCES.

3. TRANSFER OF MARINES DOES NOT SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECT
SECURITY SITUATION, WHICH WAS NOT MUCH IMPROVED BY THEIR
ARRIVAL ANYWAY. PEACEKEEPING DIRECTOR FOR FAR SOUTH AND
COMMANDER OF 4TH ARMY, LT. GEN, SAN CHITBATIMA, NEVER
WANTED OUTSIDE TROOPS IN FIRST PLACE, HE HAS BEEN COMPLAINING
FOR 2 YEARS THAT RTG NEVER SEEMS TO FIND BUDGET TO GIVE HIM
ADDITIONAL 3 BATTALIONS HE IS AUTHORIZED FOR HIS 4TH ARMY:
HOWEVER, SOMEHOW DEFENSE OR INTERIOR MINISTRIES CAN COME
UP WITH PER DIEM TO SUPPLY SOLDIERS AND POLICE SENT
DOWN FROM CENTRAL THAILAND ON TDY OPERATIONS. SAN HAS
WANTED TO RECRUIT LOCALLY TO MINIMIZE SUCH INCIDENTS AS
NOVEMBER29 MURDERS WHICH HAVE OCCURRED IN PAST AND LIKELY
TO BE REPEATED IN FUTURE ETHNIC CONFRONTATIONS.

4. TRANSFER OF PATTANP GOVERNOR, PRASIT KOMONMARN, IS SOP
TO PROTESTERS AS WELL, SINCE HE RECENTLY ARRIVED AND NOT REALLY
VILLAIN IN THE PIECE. HOWEVER, APPOINTINGTERMSAK SAMANTARAT
AS NEW GOVERNOR IN PATTANI IS GOOD RTG MOVE, SINCE TERMSAK
IS MUSLIM AND SON OF FORMER MUSLIM ADMINISTRATOR OF PATTANI
(IN DAYS WHEN RTG OFFICIALS RULED FROM CITIES AND NOT AS
GOVERNORS OF PROVINCE). TERMSAK BECOMES FIRST MUSLIM GOVERNOR
IN SOUTH AND HOLDS HIGHEST MUSLIM CIVIL SERVICE POSITION.
HE ALSO CARRIED THAT DISTINCTION IN FORMER JOB AS DEPUTY
GOVERNOR ("PHALAAAT") IN REMOTE SATUN PROVINCE, WHICH SAYS
SOMETHING ABOUT THE LACK OF MUSLIMS IN THE HIGHER REACHES TF
THE CIVIL SERVICE. TERMSAK HAS A GOOD REPUTATION AND WAS
FAIRLY SUCCESSFUL IN A PREVIOUS TOUR AS DISTRICT OFFICER IN
NARATHIWAT. BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THST THAI PROVINCIAL GOVERNORS
ARE NEITHER MIRACLE MEN NOR EVEN KEY PLAYERS IN MANY UNRULY
AREAS, A D EXPECT THAT TERMSAK IS IN FOR HIS SHARES OF TROUBLES
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IN FUTURE TOO.

5. POLARIZATION OF CONFRONTATION PRODUCED BACKLASH:
THAI BUDDHIST SECONDARY STUDENTS BEGAN ORGANIZING GANGS
IN SEVERAL PROVINCES AND THREATENED MUSLIM CHILDREN IN URBAN AREAS
IN RESPONSE TO MOB'S BEATING RTA OFFICER TO DEATH (SONGKHLA
PQOLM CHINESE MERCHANTS FROM THREE SOUTHEASTERN MUSLIM PROVINCES
HAVE SENT MANY DEPENDENTS OUT OF AREA AND UNLIKELY TO

RETURN.

MONEYMEN,SWHO HAD STARTING MOVE FUNBS AFTER FALL OF INDOCHINA
LAST YEAR, NOW REPORTEDLY SPEEDING UP TRANSFERS OUT OF AREA AND
EVEN OUT OF COUNTRY. WEALTHIEST MAN IN YALA, WHO HAS ENDURED
SHAKEDOWNS AND THREATS FOR YEARS, HAS FINALLY GIVEN UP AND
WILL REPTRTEDLY MOVE TTBANGKOK. EXPECT THIS WILL ALLOW EVEN
MORE MUSLIM BANDIT AND MALAYASIAN COMMUNIST MANIPULATION
OF HIS MINES END PLANTATIONS, TO DETRIMENT OF LOCAL THAI
ECONOMY. IF MORE ORDINARY THAI PULL OUT OF MUSLIM PROVINCES,
REMAINING RTG OFFICIALS WILL CERTAINLY LOOK--AND PERHAPS
BE DRIVEN TO ACT--LIKE ALIEN OCCUPYING ARMY.

6. IN SUM, PATTANI MUSLIMS NOT ONLY WON JUSTICE THEY SOUGHT
THROUGH DEMONSTRATION, BUT RTG'S FUTURE IN SOUTH HAS BEEN
HURT BOTH BY SIZE OF REACTION AND BY ITS OWN LE GTHY
WAFFLING. POLARIZATION HAS OCCURRED BOTH SIDES, WITH
MUSLIM SEPARATISTS UNDOUBTEDLY GAINING MORE DOMESTIC
AND FOREIGN SYMPATHIZERS DUT TO MURDERS AND TORTURE OF
MUSLIHS. RTG HAS HAD LONG PAINFUL HISTORY OF CLUMSY
DEALING WITH ITS MALAY/MUSLIMS IN FAR SOUTH, AND EXPECT WE
SHALL SEE FURTHER EPISODES IN FUTURE.

CASTRODALE
WHITEHOUSE

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